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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Reniero et al.  
Appl. No.: PCT/EP00/01797  
Filed: March 2, 2000  
Title: LACTIC ACID BACTERIA STRAINS CAPABLE OF PREVENTING  
DIARRHOEA  
Art Unit: Unknown  
Examiner: Unknown  
Docket No.: 112843-031

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, DC 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

Please amend the above-identified patent application as follows:

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 3 and 6-11 as follows:

3. (Once Amended) The lactobacillus according to claim 1 which is selected from the group consisting of *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* and *Lactobacillus paracasei*.

6. (Once Amended) A method for preparing an ingestable support material comprising the step of using lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus* capable of adhering to and essentially colonizing the intestinal mucosa and capable of preventing infection of intestinal epithelial cells by rotaviruses.

7. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 6, wherein the *Lactobacillus* strain is contained in the ingestable support material in an amount from about  $10^5$  cfu / g to about  $10^{12}$  cfu / g support material.

8. (Once Amended) The method according to claim 6 wherein the ingestable support material is a food composition selected from the group consisting of milk, yogurt, curd, cheese, fermented milks, milk based fermented products, ice-creams, fermented cereal based products, milk based powders, and infant formulae.

9. (Once Amended) A method for the treatment of a disorder associated with diarrhoea comprising the step of administering to a patient suffering a disorder associated with diarrhoea lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus* capable of adhering to and essentially colonizing the intestinal mucosa and capable of preventing infection of intestinal epithelial cells by rotaviruses.